



**BUILDING STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS COMMITTEE**

Meeting Report

April 19, 2004

**PRESENT:** Chair Cindy Chavez, Councilmember Ken Yeager, Councilmember Nora Campos

**STAFF:** Jim Holgersson, City Manager's Office; Stephan Haase, Mike Hannon, Planning, Building and Code Enforcement; Jim Helmer, Kevin O'Connor, Department of Transportation; Jim Peterson, Airport; Avo Makdessian, Mayor's Office; Norm Sato, City Attorney's Office.

The meeting convened at 1:38 p.m.

**a. Vehicle Abatement (Planning, Building and Code Enforcement)**

Stephan Haase, Director of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement introduced the CSA team of Jim Helmer, Director of Transportation, Deputy Directors Mike Hannon and Kevin O'Conner. The report was based upon the follow-up reference to Vehicle Abatement and Streetsweeping.

Mr. Haase addressed the Committee on ideas for the next year with the existing resources and how they may be able to leverage them including:

- Vehicle Spotters Program
- Partnership of Code Enforcement Division/DOT "Hot Spots"
- Improve Departmental Coordination

Jim Helmer stated to build in terms of looking for improved efficiencies across CSA's and across departments, the DOT parking compliance team is about 3 times the size of PB&CE team. They do similar functions and focus mainly on parking regulations and participate in abating vehicles particularly on street sweeps, pavement and tree trimming programs. Staff has a very high level of backlog complaint calls and if we can work together to get the calls and response times down that will be a good start.

Mr. Haase reviewed the AVASA funding:

1. The amount of money available for distribution to the cities is based upon the number and origins of vehicle registrations.
2. Funds are distributed by two methods:

Formula based: Half is distributed on a formula basis by population percentage of each city in the county. Currently, San Jose has 53% of the population in the county.

Performance based: Fluctuates based on the total number of vehicles that are towed and the percentage of vehicles that any individual jurisdiction tows. If we were to fall behind in towing our percentage may go down slightly given the other cities maintain their level of towing.

Councilmember Campos asked if the pilot program was similar to the Mt. Pleasant program that was just finished and if there is a criterion Staff has developed so neighborhoods qualify for the program.

Mike Hannon stated the "hot spots" program will be similar except they will be utilizing DOT Parking Compliance Officers and Code Vehicle Abatement Officers to focus on a neighborhood where there is a high incidence of abandoned or excessively stored vehicles. Staff will be working with Council offices to identify the areas that really need the increased vehicle abatement services. Staff will meet to identify the number of neighborhoods that may need the services. The different criteria will be taken from each district that varies.

Mr. Haase stated the additional strategy would be to look at the overall complaint driven process and increase our performance in this area and not just geographically.

Councilmember Yeager asked if they will be coming back with a policy to create more of the parking prohibitions during specific times and wanted to know how this related to Staff getting the tickets and towing implemented.

Mr. Helmer stated they do not have a hard policy. What they have is about 300 miles of the City that is severely impacted by overnight and long-term parking. Those are the areas that staff received the greatest number of complaints in terms of street sweeping effectiveness becoming useless. Distributing flyers in these circumstances has not resulted in the effects we were hoping for. Where we have had the greatest success is in educating the public. In the areas over 50% with the highest impact of parked cars, we do a combination of flyers and parking prohibition.

Councilmember Yeager asked if staff is working with the SNI teams to get the word out regarding the parking prohibition option.

Kevin O'Connor stated that staff is meeting with the various SNI and neighborhood groups where signs are being installed. They are also meeting with the council office representatives by going into the community and explaining the parking problems to the residents and how it can be rectified with the parking prohibitions and have been getting some support from them in that they do want parking signs installed, they have been going through the process of installing the signs with them. Signs are not being installed in areas where they are not wanted. Staff responds to any calls received regarding parking impacts by meeting with communities and individuals explaining the options they have regarding putting in parking prohibitions.

Councilmember Yeager asked if there is any way to gauge efficiencies and stated that some of our delays in towing are due to lack of staff or in not using them effectively.

Mr. Hannon stated the staffing data was collected in the survey but not included in the memo. San Diego, which is similar in size to San Jose in terms of the activity, has roughly the same number of officers that Santa Clara does.

Councilmember Yeager asked about the possibility of the City of Santa Clara having the four-day turn around and their related numbers.

Mr. Hannon said he would provide the Committee with the Santa Clara information.

Chairperson Chavez asked if, from a longer term, sustainable perspective we could cut through the areas that we have the ability to have cooperation across departments. She wanted to know what the strategy is to get to that next level of work?

Mr. Haase stated staff receives 28,000 complaints on vehicle abatement and tow about 5,000 cars and does not tow every car. If a larger number of staff can be leveraged for the 28,000 complaints, the number of staff necessary for the towing activity would be less. Other resources in the neighborhood could be used. We still spend some time chasing cars that have complied and moved.

Mr. Helmer added a team of Parking Control Officers and Managers are being formed in both departments to study some ways to break through and provide services more effectively and efficiently.

Chairperson Chavez stated working with the Police Department and the TABS program the school district sends out short letters and response has been very high. This has allowed time to focus on the problem cases almost immediately. If we know we have a certain amount of compliance after the warning is put on the cars and there are indicators that allows us to know we can implement 'X' action. 1) Code Enforcement has a methodology for tracking and allowing staff to re-deploy resources; 2) across department (including the police department) on a certain day, generates a computer list that Team "X" gets and will take care of issues throughout the day. Maybe the entire inoperability vehicles work that PD does may allow the team to assist on small assignments. She is interested in the broader collaboration and how strong the department teams are contributing.

Mr. Haase stated the approach taken is to start with the two CSA's (DOT & PBCE since they have the same classification of employees doing similar work) and expand.

Chairperson Chavez said the cleanup and debris solution still gets back to the basic problem of needing to collectively do a better job of informing citizens that they can call 277-4000 to get the cleanup to happen and wanted to know if it is the PD that responds.

Mr. Helmer added that one of the areas in discussion is a cross-departmental effort in improving services. For instance, parking control officers at DOT are cleaning up glass. They have the equipment in their scooters. The debris left after the scene of an accident is

not addressed properly by those expected to do it and it slips through the cracks because other staff assumes it is being taken care of. It is imperative that all of our employees take a broader look at the street or neighborhood and focus on the problem themselves or follow-up to make sure somebody does.

Chairperson Chavez added that in general, the efforts are moving in the right direction and staff understands the finer points. She does not have a real good sense of how to follow-up except to keep on observing what is seen in the neighborhoods. As the reports continue to update she is interested in what changes are being made.

Councilmember Chavez requested Mr. Helmer work with staff from this report and show changes and improvements in future updates.

Chairperson Chavez extended her gratitude on a very good report.

**No action was required by the Committee.**

**b. Airport Neighborhood Services Group (ANSG) Update (Airport)**

Jim Peterson addressed the Committee on the advocacy and outreach activities of the Airport Neighborhood Service Group (ANSG). This is the second report used by the recommendation from the City Auditor. This report will assist in keeping items on track. The next report will show significant improvements in the curfew that will be reported out next quarter. Mr. Peterson highlighted the areas reported for October, November and December of 2003.

Chairperson Chavez asked what the temporary plan was for concessions.

Mr. Peterson stated staff has put vending machines in the bag claim area and are working with the concessionaires that may have a cart service during peak travel periods. They are actively addressing the concessions concern with the new airport.

Chairperson Chavez stated her fear is the airport construction will deter people and they would start to fly out of Oakland or San Francisco. Maybe little promotions with the concessions like lucky bucks for food or something could be done.

Mr. Peterson added the courtesy ride was available for visitor use that was prompted by the public concerns on the perceived excessive walking, regarding carrying children and luggage.

Chairperson Chavez asked why the term 'perceived' was used.

Mr. Peterson stated it depends on what level the standard is. The industry standard is 1,000 feet of walking. Less is best but it depends on the airport and the layout.

Councilmember Yeager asked if there is anything else that can be done besides sending letters to residents. He said a lot of the issues have to do with the over flights and wanted to know if there is more we can be doing in this area and if there is a way to inform residents via email or letter to follow-up with their complaints.

Chairperson Chavez added any time we show progress in taking their complaint seriously, it buys us goodwill like nothing else does. We need to figure out a way to demonstrate we are doing really hard work.

Mr. Peterson stated the direction is to send a letter to individuals who have responded to the noise line saying we have sent another letter to the FAA and are addressing a, b, c.

Councilmember Yeager stated he thinks this is a good idea. ANSG staff can evaluate it and see if Airport Staff wants to do it; whether it is a letter sent out to everybody or only those marked by a specific issue.

Councilmember Yeager asked if a decrease in curfew violations has been seen because of the new fines and if the airlines are taking it more seriously or if just because it was better weather.

Mr. Peterson stated there were more weather intrusions. The compliance was up 20% but it was during a time of a lot of good weather. Staff sends out a lot of information via electronic newsletters and maybe should include a targeted update to a specific group.

Councilmember Yeager asked if the fines being levied are going to show up in the report. He also wanted to know at what point there is a fee. He doesn't think the Committee has ever received a report back on the fines and would like to see one.

Mr. Peterson agreed to send the report.

Councilmember Yeager asked if in the reporting, we are trying to deal with the habitual noise hotline problems. Updates in the report need to be provided on these types of discussions.

Mr. Peterson stated they are constantly looking at the reports, monitoring and will be included in the next report.

Councilmember Campos asked how she should handle the community meetings outside of the core (airport) area. She has concerned county constituents that are very vocal and the momentum is growing. She wants to make sure there is a strategy for working with them to address their concerns and will work with Mr. Peterson's staff to provide the concerns.

Mr. Peterson stated they do outreach efforts and he is not aware of any complaint that has not received a response. They will follow-up with District 5.

Councilmember Yeager addressed recommendations suggested by the City Auditor agreed to by Airport staff:

- 1) Develop a standardized constituent complaint form to document the nature of the complaint, how the issue was resolved, any follow-up action taken, and how long it took to resolve the complaint.
- 2) Develop a standardized report format which includes comprehensive information on all areas of responsibility.
- 3) Collaborate with, monitor, and report on the efforts of the other City entities that are responsible for the identified responsibilities.
- 4) Collaborate with the identified City entities in the City Council's June 25, 2001 and November 13, 2001 memoranda and monitor and report on their progress and efforts regarding their respective areas of responsibility.

Mr. Peterson stated he would follow-up in categorizing the report and adding any generalized statements to provide an update. He believes the work plan folds into the report and the Committee has identified those core areas of importance, and the workplan should feed into this.

Chairperson Chavez stated in today's report there was a gap between what was reported and what the understanding was.

Mr. Peterson stated they are listening and he has good feedback with the different methods.

Chairperson Chavez recommended 1) Jim Peterson meet with Councilmember Yeager and 2) ANSG staff work with Councilmember Campos' staff to come up with a strategy for District 5 community.

The next quarterly report should include these specific items

**The Committee accepted the report.**

**e. Oral Petitions**

None.

**f. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

Cindy Chavez, Chair  
Building Strong Neighborhoods Committee